

MEDIA RELEASE

**Attention: News Director
For Immediate Release
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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**FEDERAL JURY FINDS TAYLORSVILLE MAN GUILTY
OF ALL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES**

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, announced today that on January 18, 2006, **MICHAEL BLACK**, age 54, of Taylorsville, Kentucky, in Spencer County, was **found guilty** by a federal jury in United States District Court, Louisville, Kentucky, of charges which included knowingly receiving, possessing, and distributing child pornography transported, shipped, or mailed in interstate commerce via computer. In addition, **Black** was found guilty of attempting to persuade, entice, or coerce a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct and attempting to provide child pornography to a minor for the purpose of inducing a minor to participate in sex between an adult and a minor.

The jury's verdict was returned following deliberations of one hour and fifteen minutes after a five-day trial before John G. Heyburn II, Chief Judge, United States District Court.

The jury heard testimony from Dan Haueter, Police Chief, New Waterford, Ohio, who began undercover work on the Internet in 2003 in order to identify and prosecute people who were preying on minors (particularly young girls) for sexual purposes. Haueter created an Internet "profile" of a

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15-year-old girl named Tina who lived in Ohio, with the screen name "tinagreeeneyes2000." Other evidence presented to the jury included:

On January 24, 2004, Chief Haueter – acting as "tinagreeeneyes2000," entered a Yahoo! Chat room titled "I like older men best." Chief Haueter testified that it didn't take very long before "Tina" received a private message from the screen name "dads_here2003."

Haueter was able to look at "dads_here's" profile which included a photograph of the person identified as Michael, age 49. The profile listed Michael's location as Kentucky – Louisville – Shelbyville. The marital status showed married but looking. According to the profile, Michael was online at the time Chief Haueter checked it.

Chief Haueter had set his computer to record or log any computer messaging in which he might engage. As a result of this setting, Chief Haueter was able to capture or save the instant message communication with "dads_here" or Michael on January 24. Immediately, "dads_here" told "Tina" that she was a hottie, that he liked her profile picture, and he wanted to know whether she had ever had sex with an older guy. "Tina" responded that she had never had sex at all, to which "dads_here" responded "cool" and volunteered that a girl he had met the previous weekend, January 18, who was "Tina's" age hadn't had sex either, but that now she had. **Black**, "dads_here," admitted to "Tina" that he had met the other girl in the same chat room and that she had lived 5 hours from where he lived. He described how he had driven to meet the other girl, called her on her cell phone, picked her up, and driven her to a motel in a town about 10 miles from where the girl lived. He went on to describe to "Tina" how he had had sex with the other girl.

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Computer messages introduced showed how **Black** continued to talk about the other girl, including the fact that he had taken pictures of her in the motel. “Dads_here” sent the pictures of the girl to “Tina.” He referred to the girl as “Steen” and told “Tina” that it was short for “Christine.” Haueter and an employee of New Waterford placed a phone call to the cell phone number “dads_here” had given “Tina” earlier in the chat. The chat text referenced the phone call.

Haueter continued his investigation by chatting with “dads_here” for several days. The on-line chats between “dads_here” and “tinagreeneyes” occurred on January 25, January 26, January 27, January 28, and January 29, 2004.

During these communications, “dads_here” revealed his date of birth, his mailing address in Kentucky, the kind of car he drove, what his wife did for a living, what he did for a living, his middle and last names, and other personal information. He also used a web camera hooked up to his home computer to transmit images of himself to “Tina” in Ohio. In one web camera session, **Black** showed his face. In another session, he sent “Tina” – a person he believed to be 15 years old – images of his erect, naked penis.

In addition to himself, **Black** used his web camera to show “Tina” images of child pornography. The chat texts between “dads_here” and “Tina” included several instances when “dads_here” showed “Tina” images of underage children engaging in sexual explicit conduct.

During chats between “dads_here” and “Tina,” **Black** made plans to travel to Ohio to meet with “Tina.” Chief Haueter – acting as “Tina” – gave **Black** an address on Taylor Avenue in New Waterford as where she lived and they could meet. “Tina” told “dads_here” that her parents were going to be out of town for the weekend.

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On the morning of Friday, January 30, 2004, **Black** drove approximately 6 hours – through snow and other winter weather – from Kentucky to New Waterford, Ohio. There were undercover phone calls between **Black** and the New Waterford employee who posed as “Tina” on the phone. **Black**’s cell phone bill confirmed these calls. **Black** stopped along the way between Louisville/Taylorsville and New Waterford and purchased a Teddy Bear for “Tina.” He had chatted with “Tina” about bringing her a gift and during one of their phone conversations he told her about the Teddy Bear.

Around 6:00 p.m. on January 30, **Black** arrived in the New Waterford area. Just as he had told “Tina” during their chats, he was driving a white Honda. **Black** was arrested in New Waterford, and the police searched his car and found a cell phone (the one **Black** had been using to talk to “Tina”), a laptop computer, external hard drive for a computer, digital camera, Teddy Bear, bag filled with personal items such as toothpaste, razors, and condoms.

When police interviewed **Black**, he admitted that he visited Yahoo! chat rooms, including “I like older men best.” He admitted that he used the screen name “dads_here2003” while he was in that chat room. He also admitted that he knew a person on Yahoo! who went by the screen name “Tinagreeneyes,” and that “Tina” told him she was 15. **Black** told the police officers that when he set up his profile on Yahoo! he had been 49 years old and that he had put his picture on his profile. He also told the officers that “tinagreeneyes” had a profile including a picture with her behind a shirt.

Black went on to admit that he had met “tinagreeneyes” in the chat room a few days before and that he had asked her whether she liked older guys and whether she had had sex with an older guy. The interview lasted for about 1 ½ hours. The jury heard transcripts of **Blacks**’ interview by law enforcement.

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The next morning, on Saturday, January 31, **Black** called his wife at their home in Taylorsville. His wife testified that **Black** called her, told her he had been arrested in Ohio, that the police might be coming to their home, and that she should pull the hard drive from the computer and hide it. **Black**'s wife did not pull the hard drive as instructed. Police seized computers from **Black**'s home and conducted forensic examinations on them. A Kentucky State Police Detective testified that between the computer seized from **Michael Black**'s home and the external hard drive **Black** took with him to Ohio, several hundred images of child pornography were found. **Black** pleaded guilty to charges in state court in Ohio which required **Black** to register as a sex offender. **Black** admitted during a previous hearing in federal court in Louisville that he had not so registered.

Black faces a minimum sentence of 15 years in prison and maximum potential penalties of 115 years imprisonment, a \$1,500,000 fine, and supervised release for a period up to life.

The jury rejected **Black**'s claim that he went from Taylorsville, Kentucky to New Waterford, Ohio, on business, and that a James Christensen had put child pornography on the computers.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Jo E. Lawless and James R. Lesousky and was investigated by the Kentucky State Police, New Waterford, Ohio, Police Department, Columbiana County Sheriff's Department, Greenville, Illinois Police Department, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Black is scheduled to be sentenced before Judge McKinley on May 12, 2006, at 1:30 p.m., in Louisville, Kentucky.

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